AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1.   (Currently Amended) Method for authenticating a client ~~(110, 111, 112)~~ for access to at least one virtual network ~~(162, 163)~~ which allows the client to access the services of at least one service provider ~~(130, 131)~~, the or each virtual network being set up on a telecommunication network ~~(150)~~, characterised in that the method comprises the steps of:

-determining the compatibility (E300) of the client with a predetermined access control protocol for access to the virtual network,

- if the client is not compatible with the predetermined access control protocol, authorising (E301) data transfer between the client and at least one subscription system ~~(140, 142)~~ for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via an authentication network ~~(160)~~ which is different from the or each virtual network (162, 163) which allows a client to access the services of the or each service provider,

- if the non-compatible client subscribes to at least one service provider via the authentication network ~~(160)~~, transferring (E306) to the non-compatible client an authentication for accessing the virtual network ~~(162, 163)~~ which allows access to the services of the service provider ~~(130, 131)~~ to which the non-compatible client is subscribed and information which makes it possible to make the client compatible with the predetermined access control protocol.

2.   (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 1, characterised in that the

authentication network (160) is a virtual network or a network that is separate from the

telecommunication network.

3.   (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 1 or 2, characterised in that the

subscription system consists of at least one subscription portal (140), an authentication material

server (140) and, when the client subscribes to a service, the subscription portal transfers to an

authentication server (141) data associated with the authentication transferred to the client.

4.   (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 3, characterised in that the client is

connected to the network via a Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (100) and, if the

client is compatible with the predetermined access control protocol, the Digital Subscriber Line

Access Multiplexor performs (E308) the steps of obtaining an identifier and a client

authentication material and of obtaining a client authentication confirmation from the

authentication server.

5.   (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 4, characterised in that, if the

authentication server (141) does not confirm the authentication of the client, the method

comprises a step of authorising (E301) data transfer between the client and at least one

subscription system for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via an

authentication network which is different from the virtual networks which allow a client to

access the services of at least one service provider.

6.   (Currently Amended) Method according to Claim 3 ~~or~~ 4, characterised in that

information associated with the service provider to which the client is subscribed and/or

information characterizing the service to which the client is subscribed is also transferred to the

authentication server.

7.   (Currenlty Amended) Method according to Claim 6, characterised in that the

authentication server ~~(141)~~ additionally transfers to the Digital Subscriber Line Access

Multiplexor the information associated with the service provider to which the client is a client

and/or the information relating to the service or services to which the client is subscribed.

8.   (Original)   Method according to Claim 7, characterised in that the Digital Subscriber

Line Access Multiplexor authorises data transfer between the virtual network which allows the

client to access the services of the service provider to which the client is subscribed according to

the communication speeds to which the client is subscribed.

9.   (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 8~~ Claim 1,

characterised in that an address server ~~(140)~~ is also associated with the virtual authentication

network, and in that the address server allocates an address to the client for data transfer on the

virtual authentication network (160)

10.   (Currently Amended) Method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 9~~ Claim 1,

characterised in that the telecommunication network is a high-speed network based on .Ethernet

technology, and in that the predetermined access control protocol is a protocol of the IEEE

802.lx type, and in that the clients are connected to the Digital Subscriber Line Access

Multiplexor via connections of the DSL type.

11.   (Currently Amended) System for authenticating a client (110) for access to at least one

virtual network (162, 163) which allows the client to access the services of at least one service

provider (130, 131), the or each virtual network being set up on a telecommunication network

(150), characterised in that the system comprises;

- means (200) for determining the compatibility of the client with a predetermined access control

protocol for access to the telecommunication network,

- authorisation means (200) for authorising, if the client is not compatible with the predetermined

access control protocol, data transfer between the non— compatible client and at least one

subscription system

• for subscribing the client to at least one service provider via a network (160) which is different

from the virtual networks which allow a client to access the services of a service provider,

- means ~~(200)~~ for transferring to the non— compatible client, if the non—compatible client subscribes to at least one service provider via the authentication network ~~(160)~~, an authentication for accessing the virtual network.~~(162, 163)~~ which allows access to the services of the service provider ~~(130, 131)~~ to which the non-compatible client is subscribed and information which makes it possible to make the client compatible with the predetermined access control protocol.

12.   (Currently Amended)   Computer program stored on an information support, said program comprising instructions which make it possible to carry out the authentication method according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 10~~ Claim 1 when it is loaded and run by a computer system.

13.   (Currently Amended)   Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexor ~~(100)~~ which allows at least one client ~~(110)~~ to access the services of at least one service provider ~~(130, 131)~~, characterised in that the client line multiplexer ~~(100)~~ comprises means for relaying the information transmitted by the client and associated with authentication of the client to an authentication server ~~(141)~~.

14.   (Original)   Multiplexer according to Claim 13, characterised in that the means for relaying the information associated with authentication comprise a software module according to the IEEE 802.1x standard.